FPMR 101—11.2

RECORDS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

Managing Forms

FORMS

MANAGEMENT

1969

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

> RECORDS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOKS are developed by the National Archives and Records Service as technical guides to reducing and simplifying paperwork.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOKS:

FOREWORD

Before discussing the responsibilities of forms management, it would be well to define a form, which is nothing more than a kind of questionnaire with the constant information printed on it, leaving spaces for the entry of variable information. It is generally printed on paper or some related substance; it may be printed by any of many reproduction processes (it may be reproducible itself); and it may be constructed of several similar or different parts or attachments.

Probably the best criterion for judging whether a piece of paper is a form is its function in relation to a procedure or system. Does it qualify as an essential link in an operating procedure and as a medium for communication?

For forms management to be effective, it must find its basic inception and impetus at the policy making levels of management. There must be a topside understanding and appreciation of what forms management is and what it can do. This handbook seeks to provide that understanding and appreciation.

For forms management to be effective, it must also find the forms originator accepting responsibility for his role in improving procedures through a forms review. Eventually each existing form and proposed form should thus get a careful analysis. Only after such an analysis and after use, quantity, cost, construction, and distribution factors are determined should a form go to the printer.

CONTENTS

I. THE NEED FOR FORMS MANAGEMENT

It takes many forms (estimated to be some 360,000 different ones, utilizing fifteen billion copies) to keep the wheels of the Federal establishment turning. In Government, as in industry, it is a rare procedure which does not require the use of several forms. Forms provide the skeletal structure to most systems. It is the dependence of Government upon its multitude of systems and procedures then that brings forms into being.

Since forms are helpful in performing work, they are frequently used in procedures to dictate the way work is laid out. By their very design, forms often guide the flow of work through an office or a number of offices. Systems use well constructed forms to increase production and promote accuracy, with a minimum of backtracking and delay. Little wonder then that almost three-fourths of all Federal records are forms, and half of all Federal reports are forms.

In short, forms are popular because they seem so efficient. They can collect and transmit valuable information fast. They can furnish a reasonably compact record. They can be dutiful servants of management, in that they are often the natural work units for office work, such as computer input and cost accounting. If there were no such things as forms, Federal administrative costs would rise dramatically. To attempt to conduct business without forms would truly be inefficient.

The Problem

However efficient forms are collectively, individual forms may be something less than efficient. Since virtually every office has to use many forms, and the resulting work occupies a significant part of the time of its staff, it is essential that office forms should be well designed so as to require the minimum effort on the part of those who have to complete or use them—whether civil servants or members of the public.

The best of forms are usually capable of improvement from time to time if only because needs and circumstances change with the passing of time. The result of forms review will naturally vary according to the frequency with which it is undertaken and the extent of changes in the requirements, but it is generally worthwhile. In one Federal agency, examination of 536 forms over a period of one year resulted in major changes affecting almost two-thirds of them. While some were transferred to other agencies, 176 were abolished, and 112 were combined, reduced in size, redesigned or otherwise amended. The consolidations and copy reductions among the 201 which were retained eliminated 1,890,000 pieces of paper a year. This is a typical story—repeated over and over.

Many defects in forms are the result of designing forms without paying sufficient attention to both the beginnings and ends of work, e.g., by concentrating on information required without sufficiently considering the precise sources by which it will be provided. Other defects are usually due to one or more of eight things:

- The form is the wrong tool for the procedure

- It is more difficult to fill in than it should be

- It contains unneeded information

- It duplicates or overlaps the information on another form

- The instruction which prescribes its use is not clear, or is incomplete

- Obsolete forms are still in the supply system

- Creation is uncontrolled, or design standards are otherwise not followed

- Too many copies are made and kept

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NEW FORMS PRODUCING MACHINES

The new office technology, highly mechanized, depends upon forms as much as the old, largely manual office technology.

The great difference, as shown below, is that the new technology utilizes specialty forms, such as the continuous interleaved variety, rather than single sheet cut forms which dominated the old technology.
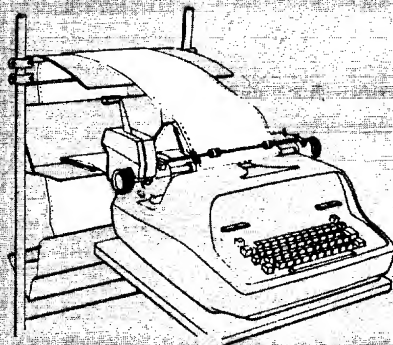
CONTINUOUS FORMS TYPEWRITER
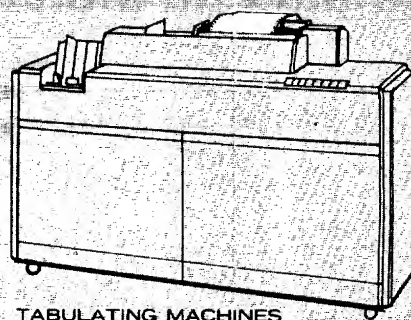
TABULATING MACHINES

DATA PROCESSOR

DATA COMMUNICATIONS

AUTOMATIC WRITING MACHINES

HIGH SPEED PRINTER

Figure 1

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Also, when a form is studied in the light of any related forms and procedures, possibilities may arise for improvement that go beyond the specific actions of entering information on the form or taking data from it in some prescribed sequence. The very nature of the information called for by 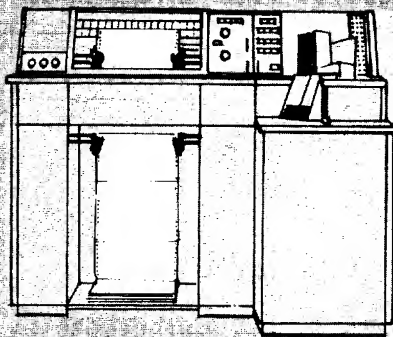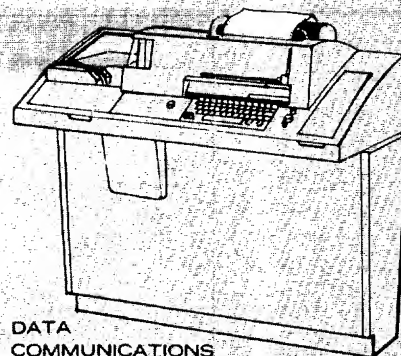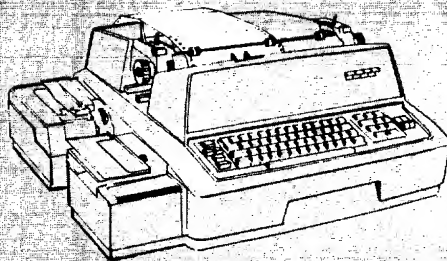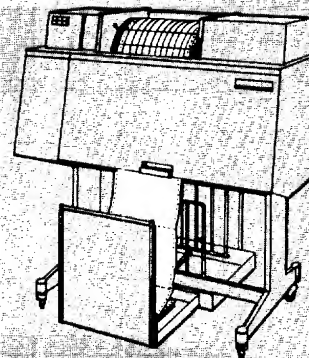a form may, by study, tell much about workload and work content that is more significant than the immediate act of making entries. Clearly, it is to the advantage of agencies to see that such studies are conducted.

Furthermore, with today's computers and terminals—with the event of punched paper tapes, tape-to-card and tape-to-tape converters, the storage of data on magnetic tapes and discs—the principle of single entry of basic data and automatic transmission and processing with minimum intervention of people calls for a change in the role forms should play in an agency's systems picture. Figure 1 depicts how the new technology relies upon forms.

Forms Can Be Managed

An administrative resource as inherently useful as forms has to be controlled. It can be, using the techniques of *forms management.*

Forms management can be defined simply. It says someone from management must weigh the work implications of each form before it is printed. The member of management who does this must be aware of how he can improve operating efficiency, suppress costs, and enhance public service through such a review.

A forms managerial review, properly located in the organization, with a skilled staff, and in cooperation with all other agency elements, can assure a Department Secretary or Agency Administrator that management has accepted the responsibility (a) for ascertaining that each form fulfills a basic requirement of an approved operating procedure, (b) for designing it so that it will perform its purpose efficiently and effectively, (c) for specifying the most economical method of manufacture, and (d) for establishing a system of stock control and replenish-

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THE OBJECTIVES OF A FORMS PROGRAM

1. Only needed forms, utilizing only needed information, get approved

2. All forms meet design standards

3. Forms are used to achieve more efficient procedures

4. Forms are printed, distributed, and replenished economically

Figure 2.

ment that will make forms available when needed, in economic quantities. See figure 2 for a more condensed summation of objectives.

In view of the wide range of economies made possible by such a program, forms management should be a staff-saving, not a staff-adding function.

What Must Be Done

Congress, through its enactment of the Federal Records Act of 1950, recognized the desirability of more control over records creation. The 1950 statute requires the head of each agency to utilize the regulations of the Administrator of General Services to this end. In appendix A of this handbook will be found the GSA regulations on forms management. The provisions set forth there have been repeatedly tested for their validity over the last two decades and are widely accepted as the minimum requirements for an effective forms management program. So long as the cost of forms within the Federal administrative process is in excess of one billion dollars a year, and so long as they account for two-thirds of the Federal printing bill, forms management is a must.

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II. ORGANIZING THE PROGRAM

A large number of employees have a well identified stake in some phase of forms management in most Federal agencies. They are the:

Program officials who originate the forms

Administrative officers

Forms management staffs

Computer specialists

Reports review and control staffs

Management analysts

Filing equipment specialists

Records disposal officials

Directives specialists

Information systems technicians

Printing procurement staffs

Supply and distribution personnel

Consumers who fill in the forms

Users who read and act on the forms

Clerks who file the forms

This list numbers over a million persons, excluding the citizenry filling in public-use forms. Thus, forms seem to be everybody's business. Where so many interests overlap, relationships can grow fuzzy indeed unless there is a good understanding of people's proper roles. So let's start at the beginning.

The managing of forms constitutes a program. A program is more than a hope, or an approach, or even a group of objectives. It is additionally a structured, continuous activity. It relies on a body of theory, well conceived, and a set of practical techniques, fully formulated.

Any program must have a charter which describes (a) its mission; (b) its organizational placement; (c) the assigned personnel, even if only part time; (d) the coordinated relationships with other organizational segments; and (e) the operating procedures.

The Program Charter

Agency charters differ greatly in length and the degree of detail. A collection of these charters is maintained by the Forms Manage-

ment Council, whose secretariat is located in the Office of Records Management, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. 20408. The typical charter, in addition to covering the matters enumerated (a) through (e) in the paragraph above, serves notice on the agency of management support of the program. It signifies the program is no temporary expedient to be discarded when short-term objectives have been realized, but is part of the administrative structure of the organization.

Program Mission

The mission of a program is the combined total of its purposes, responsibilities, and authority. Where forms management is concerned there are at least nine major elements.

(1) *Planning and Training.* A forms management program must sell its services. Establishing goals for topside approval; building acceptance of the program by related staff officials; and developing understanding by operating people—these are planning tasks. Tied in closely with this planning is training that (a) sponsors and permits broader participation in the objectives of forms management, and (b) provides technical guidance for forms originators.

(2) *Coordination and Liaison.* As already indicated many have an interest in forms management. This calls for teamwork. Program leadership to provide coordination with such sister service facilities as reproduction, supply, and distribution is necessary. If there is to be an alert program, there must be an effective tie-in with the management of directives and reports. The program also needs well selected and thoroughly oriented forms liaison representatives in the components served.

(3) *Procedural Analysis.* Most proposals for a new, revised, or reprinted form are analyzed from the point of view of the procedure which gives the form meaning. The content of the form is evaluated; its effect upon work methods and procedures studied. Every item and every copy gets scrutinized. The greater the usage

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of the form and its cost, the more intense should
be the analysis. Some agencies may adopt a
"cost threshold" and thereby spend little time
reviewing forms defined as low cost.

(4) *Design Standardization.* Standards for
layout and construction are requisites to good
forms design. Standardization is closely inter-
twined with the "fact-finding" and "challenging"
stages of forms analysis. Content is translated
into a format to insure easy reading, spaced
and arranged so as to accommodate desired
entries, and to meet the needs of the writing,
transmitting and filing methods. Forms size,
typography, construction, including color and
kinds of paper and carbons, are determined
accordingly.

(5) *Registration and Identification.* Each
request for a new, revised, or reprinted form is
channeled to a central point to be recorded and
assigned for analysis. Essential data on number-
ing and identification, previous or proposed
form revisions, volume, use, production, and
distribution are available at this control point.

Title, number, and approval or edition date
are assigned as positive identification. The title
links the form to its function. The form number
and edition date show that the form has been
authorized for use.

(6) *Procurement and Reproduction.* Spec-
ifications for efficient and economical procure-
ment and printing are developed and coordi-
nated with the units performing these functions,
including lead time needed. Appropriate justi-
fication is required for specialty forms and
special bindery operations such as punching,
stapling, perforating, folding, and padding.

(7) *Distribution and Storage.* Specifica-
tions for effective storage and distribution are
developed and coordinated with both originat-
ing offices and supply facilities. Methods are
provided for determining current supplies,
establishing initial minimum and maximum
stock levels, designating minimum order pack-
ages, purging obsolete forms, and setting distri-
bution patterns and controls.

(8) *Followup.* After a time the more complex
forms must be followed up. Spot checks are
made with using points and originators. This
process is also useful in promoting the program,
maintaining proper liaison, and obtaining
provable data on benefits and savings for
reporting purposes.

(9) *Program Reporting.* A running record of
results is accumulated as the program pro-
gresses. Before-and-after data are gathered
(showing clerical, printing, and other savings) as
changes in forms and procedures are made.
These facts, with recommendations, are re-
ported to top management for use in appraising
the forms management program and in shaping
policy.

Organizational Placement

Given the Federal setting, it is difficult to
say much about organizational placement that
is relevant from one agency to another. With-
out exception, however, forms management is
a staff activity. It should be centered at a level
high enough to give the broad perspective
needed for across-the-board improvements, to
carry on significant promotion, and to provide
technical guidance. After all, many forms flow
across organizational lines.

The organizational placement of the forms
management program will have some bearing
on its functioning. The three favorite locations
for it are within the following functional areas:
(1) records management, (2) administrative
services, and (3) printing. Successful programs
are working within all three areas, yet less pro-
cedural analysis may be carried on by the forms
management program in one location than
another. Less work in procurement and repro-
duction may be done in one location than in
another. Less distribution and storage respon-
sibility may be found in one location than in
another. What is as important as considerations
of these kinds is that "curtains" of indifference
are not allowed to develop between forms and
records, between forms and reports, between
forms and management analysis. The matter of
potential cleavages is discussed at greater length
in Chapter III.

For the larger agencies, particularly the
cabinet and military departments with strong
decentralization philosophies, diverse subject
matter workloads, and sizeable field establish-
ments, forms management programs generally

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CLEARANCE REQUIRED FOR PRINTING A FORM

This form is printed on NCR (No Carbon Required) paper

FORM BC-18 (7-21-65) PRES. BY A.M. CH. K-5	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS	1. Date of request June 1, 19 XX	2. Form No. BC-487
REQUEST FOR A NEW OR REVISED FORM		3. Date required July 4, 19 XX	4. Cost Project No. BC 68-007
Complete all applicable items. Facts not known at time of request should be submitted as soon as available.		5. Division or office Programs Management Division	

6. TITLE OR DESCRIPTION Monthly Programs Schedule	7. Forms superseded BC-228	8. EDITION ☐ New ☐ Other ☒ Revised

9. TYPE OF FORM	a. Category ☒ Administrative ☐ Public use ☐ Processing ☐ Letter or memo ☐ Other	b. Number and/or title of prescribing directive OR ☒ None d. Budget Bureau number and expiration date N/A	c. Related forms none (Attach correct confidential statement when required.)

10. USAGE	a. Frequency of use ☐ Experimental ☐ One time ☐ When required ☐ Daily ☒ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually	b. Point of usage ☐ Responsible division ☒ Bureau (More than one division) ☐ Regional office ☐ Jeffersonville ☐ Other	c. How data will be filled in (all or part) ☒ Typewriter ☐ Hand ☐ High Speed Printer ☐ Other	d. Number of copies prepared at one writing e. Estimated monthly usage 125 copies f. Total number required 1000

11. REPORTING, ADDRESSING AND MAILING METHODS	a. ☐ Personal interview ——→ Starting date (1) Description of portfolios, binders, etc., to be used N/A	b. ☒ Mail ———————→ Mailing date July 30, 19 XX (2) How forms are to be addressed ☐ Cheshire label ☒ Typewriter ☐ High Speed Printer ☐ Other (3) Description of envelopes to be used *Enter form numbers or attach sample(s)* plain white ☐ Self-mailer

12. DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS	a. Size of form 10 1/2"X8"	b. Paper stock 32 lb c. w. writ	13. STOCKING AND DISPOSITION
	c. Other specifications N/A		a. Where forms will be stocked ☐ Responsible division ☒ Bureau stockroom ☐ Regional office ☐ Bureau mail service ☐ Other	b. Disposition of revised or superseded forms ☐ Use ☐ Dispose of when revision received ☒ Dispose of immediately

16. Purpose of form to furnish progress information on scheduled programs	c. Number of forms on hand ——→ 200
	15. Person to contact regarding this form Kendall Barnes, Jr.
	Building No. Annex Q	Room No. 480	Telephone Ext. X65478

For Publications Presentation Branch (Initials) PAP	16. APPROVALS			
	a. Division Programs Mgmt	Date June 2	b. Forms Management Technician Leon King	Date copy released June 4

USCOMM-DC

SUBMIT TWO (2) COPIES TO: Records Management Branch Administrative and Publications Services Division

Figure 3

will be required at several levels. The principal point of management will tend to be at the "bureau" level, especially when the major paperwork systems and the directives requiring the use of forms are given final approval for issuance at this level. This means that all nine elements, enumerated above, would be present in the "bureau" program, handled by a professional staff.

Forms management at the "bureau" level should not preclude the following elements of the program from being carried on at the agency level, however. That level can still most effectively:

- Establish, stimulate, guide, coordinate, and evaluate the operations of the component bureau and field forms management programs.

- Promote forms management so that it will not fall into neglect anywhere, and keep surveillance on agency-wide forms and procedures.

Neither should forms management at the "bureau" level preclude the development of local forms in the field. Command levels, whether functional or geographic, and major field activities which have a need for a large number of local forms can generally justify a forms management program. Otherwise local forms will become uncontrolled forms (see Chapter III, page 12).

Centralization of forms management at the agency level, rather than the "bureau" level, is especially desirable where the agency is relatively small (as Federal operations are measured), or where subject matter workloads are closely interrelated.

Personnel

The heart of any forms management program is the professional staff. Here are to be found the individuals with the necessary procedural analysis capabilities, the knowledge of forms design and construction standards, the requisite information about paper and carbons and processing equipment, and the maintainers of the required internal records on forms in existence and their usage. No form should ever proceed to the printer without their approval.

Figure 3 indicates the most frequently used way to secure that approval—yes, by filling in a *form*.

There were, at last count, some twelve hundred forms professionals in the Federal Government. Their grades tend to vary with the amount of procedural analysis they do versus the extent to which they are limited to design or even drafting duties. In this spectrum, the rule seems to be the greater the time devoted to effective analysis the higher the grade.

To help the forms management professional staff in large organizations, each sizeable organizational unit should assign to one person within it responsibility for coordination with the forms management professional staff. Such an individual is usually known as a "forms liaison representative." This person should have a thorough knowledge of the paperwork within his unit. He often is the person who has coordinating and clearing duties on directives, systems, reports, and records. He may already have an organizational title as executive officer or administrative officer.

The existence of a forms liaison representative in an organizational unit becomes even more valuable in the case of methods and procedures studies. These studies must, perforce, look into the details of an office's routine. The operational knowledge provided by the the representatives in their liaison duties speeds up the process of analysis and helps assure unit acceptance of improvements.

Forms liaison representatives in field offices can be effective in sponsoring greater use of agencywide and standard forms and in helping officials develop local forms. Their duties in some field offices extend to full control and review of all forms used in the area they represent. In such instances they serve, in effect, as the forms management officers, even maintaining numeric and sometimes functional files for control purposes.

Relationships and Procedures

These matters, mentioned as parts (d) and (e) of the program charter on page 4, cover too much ground for inclusion in this chapter. They are therefore, described in the next two chapters.

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III. RELATIONSHIPS

The large number of groups of persons involved in forms management was indicated at the beginning of Chapter II. Experience shows that a successful forms management program is as dependent on these groups as on the professional staff and the liaison representatives. The role of some of the groups therefore deserves description. Teamwork is the goal.

Top Management

No matter how well conceived the forms management program may be in other respects, the program will not remain an arm of management without top management guidance. The direction taken by the program, like that of any other managerial program cutting across all segments of an organization, should reflect the views of top management.

To keep informed, top management should require reports of benefits produced, as described in Chapter V. It must evaluate the reports and intervene as the facts warrant. Here are a few matters in which top management should be particularly interested.

Local forms. Unless local forms are analyzed by persons in a position to make a managerial review they will gradually slip into the category of uncontrolled forms. It has been estimated that eleven representative uncontrolled forms require one man-year of clerical effort. Standardizing local forms will always pay off.

User reaction. The forms program should devote some manpower to interviewing forms users about form shortcomings. Users should not be put on the rack to prove their criticisms. To get field employees reaction may require special arrangements with internal audit, or inspectors general.

High usage forms. Top management should know which forms have a high annual usage. Benefits from improving or eliminating them will be far greater than tinkering with low usage forms.

Forms wastage. Millions of unused forms become obsolete every year. The tendency to over-order can only be thwarted by watching obsolescence. Personnel hesitate to order 100 copies; so the order is made out for 1,000.

Forms projects. Forms management offices should undertake the kinds of projects described on page 18. These projects may fall victim to over-the-counter priority, or an insufficient number may be undertaken, unless there is topside interest.

Relationships. Coordination is paramount in providing suitable forms. It is the theme of this entire chapter. Top management should be watchful for poor teamwork—the originator not giving the forms analyst time to review a form; the forms analyst dragging his heels in his review work; the originator not notifying the forms management program of changed usage requirements.

The Originator

When an employee of the organization picks up a piece of blank paper and starts to draw lines and to put words on that paper, leaving blank spaces in which someone will later insert data or information, he is originating a form. In many ways he is the most important person in the forms management process.

If the form will be used more than 10,000 times a year, or will require more than 30 minutes to fill in, the originator should especially study the form in the light of an examination of the whole procedure for which it is required and of the associated work that may be done in other offices. The input and output of the work should be considered as well as the main processes in between. It is particularly important to see the complete picture of action when subordinate processes, for example, copying or recording, are to be undertaken separately, before, or after the main process.

The originator should be sure he has up-to-date facts and information about the proce-

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during purposes for which the form is required; the circumstances in which it will be completed, despatched, filed, sorted and handled; and, where relevant, such information as the cost and effectiveness of arrangements and operations, the incidence of errors in completion, queries and difficulties, and the scope for possible change and improvements. Finally, forms should not be rough sketched solely as a "desk job," for direct on-the-spot investigation and observation are important preliminaries.

The above mentioned considerations for the originators can be cast as questions, as for example these:

(1) Is a new form necessary? Can an existing form be adapted to suit the need? (An existing form can sometimes be modified in such a way to cater to slight variations, so that one form can be used on a number of occasions.) Can an existing Standard or Optional Form be used?

(2) Should there be an entirely new conception of the use of the form? Can several forms used in a particular operation be reduced by designing a multi-purpose document? (For example, one copy of a form might serve as application by the public, another was a record of internal processing action, while a third becomes a notification of the action taken.) Can the form be designed to serve various purposes as it moves along with the work, and used for recording any necessary additional data in the process?

(3) How should the needs of those filling in the form influence its design? (When a form is to be completed by a member of the general public it should be designed to give him the utmost explanatory assistance. Forms which give rise to difficulties for the public will almost certainly cause more work in Federal offices because they are liable to be wrongly completed. If particular requests for information, for example to businessmen may involve them in expense and trouble, every attention should be given to design factors which will reduce their work.)

(If the form is completed by hand, out of doors, or in dirty working conditions, or where there is no proper working desk available, design may be dominated by these factors.)

(4) How will working conditions influence design at the place at which the form is dealt with? (The handling and use of the form may be greatly facilitated by design factors, for example, a special layout of information to speed up a key punching operation, a particular size to facilitate sorting or distribution.) Do the office machines to be used impose limitations as to spacing or the number of carbon copies?

(5) Are there any costly features of the first draft of the form, such as carbon patching, unusual construction, etc., which could be replaced by less costly alternatives?

Not until a number of questions like these have been answered should the originator proceed far with the rough sketch of the form. In this way the originator fully participates in the analysis phase of forms improvements, which must precede the finished design.

The Consumer

The consumer is the person who initially fills in the form—using the spaces on the form which are provided for that purpose. The consumer is interested, among other things, in insufficient writing space for the entry of data, in captions he can easily understand, in correctly placed and clearly written instructions, and in a logical sequence of the items to be filled in. The forms improvement role of the consumer is to convey promptly to the forms management office any problem he has on filling in any form.

The forms management staff by reviewing filled-in forms in the files can see whether it has provided the consumer with enough space. Notes handwritten in the margin, or on the face, will sometimes give a clue as to items with poor captions and indicate telephone calls that had to be made for elucidating explanation. Boxes repeatedly left blank will raise the question of their being needed. The lack of a "remarks" area may be indicated by information written on the back of a form.

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FILLED IN SPECIMEN FORM
ILLUSTRATING AN AGENCY DIRECTIVE

803.03 In ordering tabulating cards use form AFSC 18. Tabulating cards require specialty printing and are subject to separate review. A copy of the form is displayed below with a guide to items which may prove troublesome.

Item 1. Use a brief, clear descriptive title, indicative of the form's purpose and function. Do not use the word "card" as it refers to the physical characteristic of the form rather than the function.

Item 3. Give the abbreviated designation indicating the form's origin and extent of use.

Item 4. Use three-letter abbreviations for month followed by the year. Use last two digits, e.g., Mar 66.

Item 6. Information is standard for all tabulating cards.

Item 7. Information is standard for all tabulating cards.

Item 8. Check appropriate box or boxes, as applicable.

Item 9a. Check appropriate box for type of standard card.

Item 9b. Check appropriate box for position of stripe.

Item 9c. Check appropriate box for color of stripe.

Item 10a. and Item 10b. Check appropriate box and fill in blank space designating placement of corner cut.

Item 12. Specify color of ink; other information is standard for all tabulating cards.

Item 13. Information is standard for all tabulating cards.

Item 14. Enter total number of cards requested.

Item 14b. Enter total number of cartons (See Item 13).

Item 16. Specify type and number of machine and related equipment or attachments, if any. (For example, IBM Tabulating, IBM 026, CDC 3600).

SPECIFICATIONS FOR TABULATING CARDS

DATE SUBMITTED: 1 December 19XX

1. TITLE OF FORM: 80 Columns, Full Face

2. TYPE OF ORDER: [X] SINGLE [ ] CONSOLIDATED

3. FORM NUMBER: IBM 5081

4. DATE OF FORM: IBM undated

5. TYPE OF ACTION: [ ] NEW [ ] REVISED [X] REPRINT

6. SIZE: 7.375" (with a tolerance of plus or minus 0.005 inches) by 3.250 (with a tolerance of plus 0.0007 of an inch or minus 0.003 of an inch.) These dimensions apply to cards measured at 50% relative humidity and to a temperature of 70 degrees fahrenheit.

7. PAPER: Coniferous chemical pulp free from ground wood, or other pulp which produces a paper of like characteristics, paper to be substantially free from clay and not to show more than five percent (5%) ash.

8. COLOR OF CARD: [X] NATURAL MANILA [ ] WHITE [ ] RED [ ] SALMON [ ] BLUE [ ] GREEN [ ] BROWN [ ] YELLOW

9. CARD STRIPING

a. KIND	b. POSITION	c. COLOR		d. ADDITIONAL DATA
[X] IBM STANDARD	[X] TOP		BLUE — ROSE	
			GREEN — GRAY	
[ ] REMINGTON RAND STANDARD	[ ] MIDDLE	[X]	BROWN — SALMON	
	[ ] BOTTOM		RED — YELLOW	
			VIOLET — OTHER (Specify)	

10. CORNER CUT Designate Placement Upper Left Hand Corner

a. [ ] IBM—90 degrees 1/4" along top, 3/8" along side.
b. [ ] Remington Rand—3/8" along top, 3/8" along side.
c. All corners, except those with diagonal corner cut, will be [ ] round [ ] square.

11. MARK SENSE: [ ] YES [X] NO

12. PRINTING: In __Black__ ink. Impression to be legible without excess ink but under no circumstances to indent the card sufficiently to push any part of the surface on either side of the card out of its plane. Such indentations vary the thickness. Printing must be accurately placed so that the columnar figures will appear properly when tested through appropriate gauges. (If mark sensing is indicated the printing will be in a green, blue or black non-carbon ink for use in conjunction with mark-sense reproduction. Form number, date, title, and supersession notice (when applicable) are to be placed in exact position as on sample.

13. UNIT OF ISSUE: CN (Carton of 10,000, Packed 2,000 per box)

14. QUANTITY
a. TOTAL NUMBER OF CARDS: 1,800,000
b. TOTAL NUMBER OF CARTONS: 180

15. PACKING: [X] LEVEL A [ ] LEVEL B [ ] LEVEL C

16. TYPES OF EQUIPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH USE OF CARD: IBM Tabulating Machine

17. DELIVERY DATE: Deliver to addressee below 1 March 19XX

18. ADDRESSEE: HQ AFSC (SCAPD) Building T-1522 Andrews AFB Wash DC 20331

19. REMARKS (Give any details pertaining to the order not covered in items above. If more space is needed use plain 8" x 10½" paper.)

Suggested Source: International Business Machine Corporation

For additional information concerning delivery after arrival on Andrews AFB call Extension 5176.

AFSC FORM 18 AUG 67 PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THIS FORM ARE OBSOLETE. AFSC-AAFB WASH D.C.

Figure 4

The Processing User

After a form has been filled in, the next step usually consists of someone reading the information that has been entered. Usually this reader is expected to take action. The reader may be a keypuncher, a supply clerk, an accountant, and so on. The effectiveness of the information supplied on the form is the form is the final measure of the worth of the

form. If the information supplied presents processing problems, the form cannot be considered a good one regardless of how easy the consumer found it to enter the information.

The processing user is therefore especially interested in orderly organization of the information and in uniform design of related forms.

The forms improvement role of the processor is to tell the forms management staff promptly of any processing difficulties any form is generating.

The Reports Management Staff

So many reports are forms that there can be conflict as to who does the analysis on "report forms." Actually, the mission of most reports management offices is on information content: Do the reports require information already available? Do the reports require nonessential information? Do the reports fail to require information that is needed?

Organizations tend to give reports management programs the first challenge of report forms. Once the information aspects are approved by the reports staff, then the forms staff does not duplicate the effort. The forms clearance document often may also be used as the reports clearance document for those forms which are reports.

When the reports management office undertakes a procedural study, it should always inform the forms management office, and vice versa. The two offices should compare notes on whether overlap of data is being gathered by an organizational segment. There is, of course, no conflict between reports management and forms management on the design of forms. That falls clearly to the forms program.

The Directives Specialist

Most forms used should be prescribed in an appropriate directive. Such directives provide the best medium for broadcasting guidance that can not be fully placed on the face of the form.

- Unambiguous instructions as to who prepares, number of copies prepared, and where and when copies are submitted.

- A specimen illustration of the form with sample entries, when this would help insure accurate completion of the form.

- A description of the filing system to be used, but only is the records are to be maintained in a specific way.

- Unusual information about the source and date of supply.

A prescribing directive should not be distributed until the forms which it prescribes are also distributed, unless the effective date for use of the forms is set far enough in advance to assure availability.

Clearance of directives mentioning forms with the forms management office will often prevent erroneous references to titles, obsolete editions of forms, and the like. Also clearance serves to correct instructions calling for use of typed format of columnar worksheets when printed forms would be more appropriate. Such clearance will also help to establish when the forms management office can especially increase the usefulness of hard-to-read written procedures to consumers by providing filled-in specimen forms illustrating the "how to do it" of completion. Figure 4 is an example of a filled in specimen form from the Air Force illustrating an agency directive.

It is important that users of forms be notified of the discontinuance of a form through the same media of directives which required the original use of the forms. It is axiomatic that the office originating a form (or the office responsible for its continuing use) should also be the office discontinuing the form.

Supply Personnel

The supply of forms covers the factors of procurement, reproduction, storage, and distribution. These are tasks normally assigned to publication and supply, or similar units. Forms management can be very helpful to units performing these tasks by preparing accurate specifications.

An important part of the relationship between supply and forms management is the method for handling stock replacement orders. A "Stock Replenishment Notice" is usually prepared by

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supply operatic when the stock level of any form reaches the established minimum, with ample lead time for actionl. This is discussed more fully in Chapter IV.

Training Staff

The originator, consumer, and processing user will understand their forms improvement role if the training staff will help the forms staff prepare the necessary educational and promotional classes. These forms workshops, discussed on page 13, with their easily understood visual aids lend themselves very well to this purpose.

The Small Office

An amazing number of small offices, especially in the field, have the power to originate forms. Many are also further empowered to reproduce them on their local office duplicating equipment.

Such local forms are usually the poorest designed forms in the Government. They are also often the most costly, because of the time spent by the typist in cutting stencils.

Forms typed on stencils, of course, use different standards of design from printed forms. They rarely have an effective appearance, and the format possibilities are limited. Carbon copies of such forms are often unclear, and the paper does not stand up well under erasures or repeated handling during processing.

A secretary who must devote three hours a week to running of forms is actually running up the printing bill. It is an illusion to think that an agency's printing costs are limited to its offset machines. Field offices that administer similar programs offer a fruitful opportunity for standardization of local forms.

Small offices should have all their local forms reviewed by higher authority. The official in charge can insist upon have a forms liaison representative and seeing to it that he receives technical training.

Employee Suggestions Staff

All agencies have employee suggestion programs. Many suggestions will pertain to forms

in some way, and the forms staff should see these as well as the originators. This is an indirect method of judging the adequacy of forms design, but it is a useful one nonetheless. The same understanding should apply to public complaints. These suggestions often are helpful in that they bring about improvements that the forms designers failed to think of in the first place.

National Archives and Records Service

This Service (NARS) classifies forms according to the authority under which they are issued, as follows:

Agency Forms. Those originated and standardized for internal use throughout an individual agency, whether for operational or administrative purposes.

Bureau Forms. Those originated by relatively autonomous field offices, or at the branch and section level, for internal use in the originating office.

Uncontrolled Forms. Those for which there is no pre-audit or post-audit by management other than in the immediate office of origin.

Optional Forms. Those which are applicable in the operations of two or more agencies and approved by General Services Administration. These forms are stocked by the Federal Supply Service, GSA, for optional use by any or all agencies. Any agency may make the use of any such forms mandatory for its own purposes.

Standard Forms. Those prescribed by a Federal Agency for the mandatory use (unless formally excepted) of two or more agencies, approved by GSA in accordance with its Federal Property Management Regulations 101–11.8.

This regulation prescribed a uniform procedure whereby any Federal agency may recommend to GSA that a standard form be prescribed to meet a problem which concerns more than one Government agency.

Among the standard forms are certain fiscal forms prescribed by the Comptroller General

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GSA STOCK CATALOG,
PART II

Figure 5
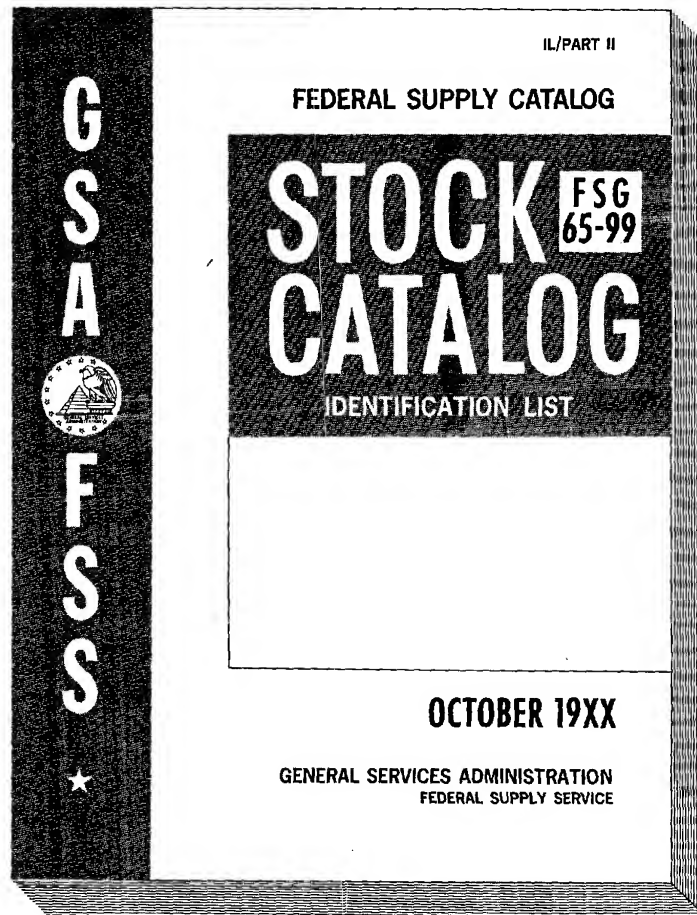
of the United States, which bear form numbers between 1,000 and 2,900. These fiscal forms are described in the General Accounting Office Policy and Procedues Manual, for Guidance of Federal agencies, Title 7, Fiscal Procedures. Standard forms are stocked by the Federal Supply Service, GSA, and all are listed in Part II of its Stock Catalog, depicted in figure 5.

Federal Report Forms. Those used by Federal agencies in gathering information which, under the Federal Reports Act of 1942 (56 Stat. 1078), must be approved by the Bureau of the Budget. The procedure for getting that approval is contained in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A–40.

The National Archives and Records Service promotes the use of three forms management workshops, one for forms originators, one for junior forms analysts, and one for senior forms analysts (forms for automated equipment).

NARS provides the secretariat for the Forms Management Council, an organization to which any forms analyst in the Federal Government may belong and receive the proceedings of the meetings.

Through its agency evaluation program NARS reviews the operations of forms programs and reports to the head of the agency on their adequacy.

Finally, NARS seeks to support forms management in any general way it can—preparation of handbooks (see the reverse side of the front cover of this handbook), regulations (see Appendix A), and national symposia with the leaders of the field as speakers.

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320–269 O—69——3

IV. PROGRAM PROCEDURES

The procedures described in this chapter are those essential to the support of the primary functions (procedural analysis, forms development, and forms replenishment). Forms management staffs should question adding any additional administrative tasks which will subtract from the maximum manhours available to perform the primary functions.

Establishing Major Files

A forms management program must rely heavily on its control files. There are usually two of these files, the numeric history file and the functional classification file. The Navy Department has combined the two in an interesting fashion.

Numeric History File

This set of folders provides a complete picture of each form from its development to its current status. Figure 6 shows the folders arranged by form number.

To provide the most useful working tool, each numeric folder should eventually contain the following:

- A copy of the current edition of the form and any previous editions, marked "Permanent Copy." Many files contain several current copies for samples.

- Rough drafts or work papers showing significant stages of development and pertinent correspondence.

- A copy of, or reference to, the regulation or other issuance authorizing use of the form.

- The original request for approval of the form and any requests for revisions, indicating the names of all using units, the manner and rate of use.

- Documentation relating to the official final approval for the printing or reproduction and issuance of the form.

- The form history record, on which is a running record of all actions taken on the particular form, including a cross reference to the functional file.

The numeric file must be dependable at all times. Folders on discontinued or obsolete forms must be promptly withdrawn, appropriately annotated, and placed in a separate discontinued numeric file for such time as required by the agency records retention schedule.

Functional Classification File

This set of folders provides the means by which forms dealing with related subject matters are brought together (sometimes by cross-reference). One copy of each collected form is classified by purpose and placed in a subject-titled folder, illustrated in figure 7. Specific details for the organization and use of this file are given in the Records Management Handbook, *Forms Analysis*.

The main purposes of the functional classification file are to:

- Avoid the creation of a new form which duplicates an existing form, or which is so similar that an existing form could be used or readily revised to serve the need.

- Detect those forms which might be eliminated, where duplication already exists, or which might be consolidated with similar forms.

- Detect those forms which should be standardized for agencywide use, or which should be analyzed and redesigned for simplification and uniformity of format, nomenclature, item sequence, spacing, size, and application of other "tricks-of-the-trade" which make for the best in forms.

- Generate studies of particular forms (often complex) in relation to their governing systems and procedures, and in relation to functional and organizational areas, which will result in improvements far beyond the form itself.
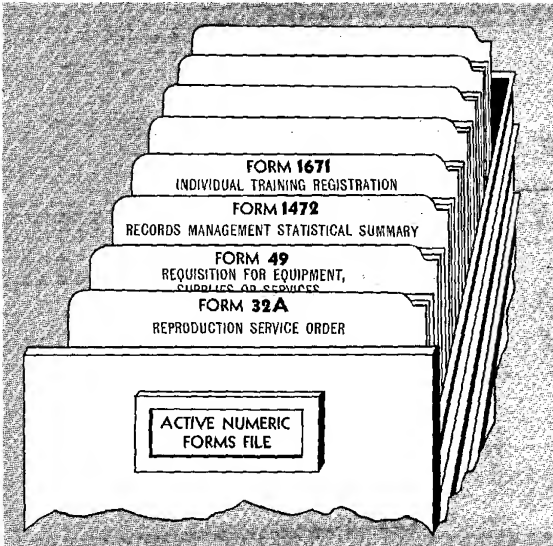
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EXAMPLE OF NUMERIC HISTORY FILE

FORM 1671
INDIVIDUAL TRAINING REGISTRATION

FORM 1472
RECORDS MANAGEMENT STATISTICAL SUMMARY

FORM 49
REQUISITION FOR EQUIPMENT,
SUPPLIES OR SERVICES

FORM 32A
REPRODUCTION SERVICE ORDER

ACTIVE NUMERIC
FORMS FILE

Figure 6

EXAMPLE OF FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION FILE

2. COMMODITIES

1.13 OBLIGATE

1.10 ESTIMATE

1.7 ALLOCATE

1.1 ACCOUNT

1. BUDGET AND
APPROPRIATIONS
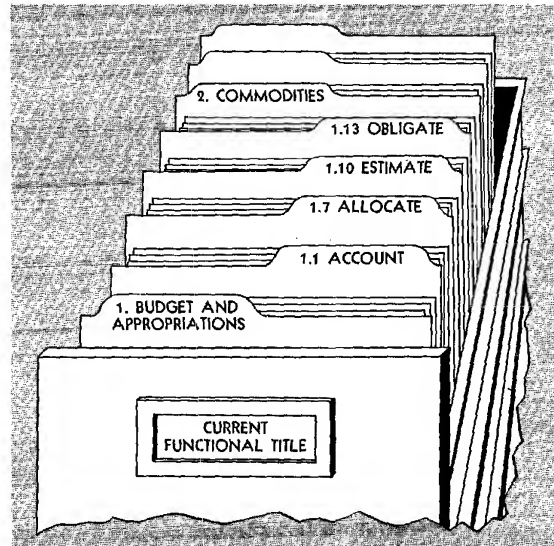
CURRENT
FUNCTIONAL TITLE

Figure 7

Assigning Identification and Control Numbers

Agencies have found the assignment of form numbers to be a necessary control device. Straight numeric order is the simplest and most flexible pattern. Elaborate numbering patterns, with alphabetic or numeric prefixes or suffixes to identify using offices should be avoided. Reorganizations, transfers of functions, and other changes break up such patterns and invariably lead to a troublesome wholesale renumbering of large groups of forms.

It may be desirable in some cases to print the old form number in parentheses following the new number such as, "Form 629 (formerly Form 324)," and drop the old form number.

Supersession notices adjacent to the new form number can be helpful and are used regularly by some forms programs—for example, "Replaces Form 324, May 1955, which will not be used." Supersession notices have proven particularly advantageous during the first three or four years of a new or revitalized program when a large volume of forms is revised, consolidated, and eliminated. Such notices also serve as guides to users and

stockroom clerks in cleaning out obsolete stocks and requisitioning current forms.

Of equal importance for control is an edition date (the month and year sent to print). The original number assigned is usually retained on any revision of the form, but the edition date should be changed to reflect each successive revision in content or design.

Issuing A Forms Catalog

A forms catalog should be custom built to fit the conditions of the agency and its forms management program. These conditions should be considered in determining the nature of the catalog:

1. Whether it is needed primarily by originators, or by a large highly decentralized forms management program staff.

2. Degree to which directives prescribing the use of forms are on a well organized and coded basis and contain illustrations of the forms involved.

3. Cost of preparing and maintaining the catalog measured against its value in promoting standardization and efficiency.

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EXAMPLE OF CARD CATALOG
(Form Status Notice)

FORM M-1916(REV. 10-61)

FORM STATUS NOTICE TRANSMITTAL NO. XX-24

TO:	Regional Commissioners District Directors National Office Division Directors	DATE June 7, 19XX			
FROM:	Facilities Management Division Internal Revenue Service	FORM STATUS NOTICES TRANSMITTED			
		Doc.	Envels.	Forms	Pub.
		1	8	26	1

The attached Form Status Notices, used to disseminate current information on all forms prescribed by the National Office, should be filed or distributed promptly.

One set of the notices should be filed, by form number, in each master file of form status notices used as a central reference source in the National, regional and district offices. In each district office an additional set of these notices should be sorted organizationally by the Administrative Division, and the appropriate notices sent to the operating element having primary interest in the form.

This numbered transmittal card accompanies each group of Form Status Notices. Only one set of transmittal cards, arranged in consecutive order by transmittal number, need be retained

U. S. TREA

1. TITLE OR DESCRIPTION Multi-Purpose Form (Machine Stationery)		2. FORM NO. 3707(11-66)*
3. ORIGINATING OFFICE Data Processing, Systems Division	4. FUNCTIONAL USING OFFICE (If different organizationally than originating office) --	
5. INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE ADP Handbook - 2140	5A. ENVELOPE(S) TO BE USED MAILER __--__ |RETURN __--__	6. FUNCTIONAL CLASS. 6.2

7. TYPE OF FORM ☐ TAX RETURN ☐ OTHER PUBLIC-USE ☒ INTERNAL USE
8. UNIT OF ISSUE 1-, 2-, 3-, 5-, and 6-part marginally punched continuous form, carbon interleaved, 9-7/8 x 11

9. THIS FORM IS ☐ NEW ☒ REVISED ☐ OBSOLETE ☐ SUPERSEDED

10. THIS FORM SUPERSEDES

11. THIS FORM SUPERSEDED BY

12. FILLED IN BY ☒ NATIONAL OFFICE ** ☐ REGIONAL OFFICE ☐ DISTRICT OFFICE ☐ SERVICE CENTER ☐ PUBLIC ☒ NCC OTHER (Specify)

13. STOCKED BY ☐ NATIONAL OFFICE ☐ REGIONAL OFFICE ☐ DISTRICT OFFICE ☐ SERVICE CENTER ☐ ORIG. OFFICE ☒ NCC OTHER (Specify)

14. PRESENT STOCK ☐ USE ALL PRIOR ISSUES FIRST ☐ DISPOSE OF WHEN REVISED OR SUPERSEDING FORM IS RECEIVED ☐ SEE ITEM 16
15. INITIAL DISTRIBUTION ☐ YES ☒ NO

16. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ** One-part form stocked in IRS Distribution Center
* This status notice reissued to correct Item 8.
This form used for multi-purpose console operation print-out.

6-5-XX   D. Patton

U.S. TREASURY DEPARTMENT INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE	FORM STATUS NOTICE	GPO 939-819 FORM 1989 (REV. 2-68)

Figure 8

Executives should not be too hasty to insist upon a comprehensive forms catalog, particularly under a new program. Simple forms listings might be issued during the establishing phase, and some plans might be developed for a more elaborate listing. Not until the "weeding out" or "crash" stage of a program has been completed (often a year or more in larger programs) can the forms staff make a sound management judgment on the question of whether to issue a descriptive catalog or only a numeric listing.

Forms catalogs currently issued by Government agencies range from the listing of forms by number only (serving principally for identification and supply requisitioning) to comprehensive catalogs which include edition date, title of the form, coded references to manuals or regulations prescribing their use, functional

classification, those requiring special safeguards, using organizations, unit of issue, stock points, and accountable forms. A good example of this is the Air Force catalog.

Another interesting and effective type of forms cataloging has been developed and used for the past several years by the Internal Revenue Service. It consists of an 8 x 5-inch Card form, entitled "Form Status Notice," for each officially approved form. Each card, as shown in figure 8, contains complete information on the form to which it applies.

This card form is filled in for each new, revised, or discontinued form by the central forms program at headquarters. It is then reproduced in sufficient copies for controlled distribution to headquarters division offices (including supply), regional offices, and district offices.

This forms status system (somewhat comparable to library catalog cards) has been successful at the Internal Revenue Service, where the points of distribution are well controlled and are not too many. This system has the distinct advantage of making data on forms available promptly. It can be less costly in many instances than the re-issuance of bound catalogs or the printing and distribution of numerous page changes for loose leaf catalogs.

Review of New and Revised Forms

Often the forms originator will not have assembled the data or made the examination for new and revised forms described on page 9.

When this is the case, or if the originator has overlooked something significant, the originator should expect a challenge from the forms staff. The questions to be asked will vary according to circumstances, but the following are those asked most frequently:

(1) What causes the work (and therefore gives rise to the form); what are the purposes form, the operation, the procedure; what are the essential needs or unalterable limitations?

(2) How is the work done? (that is, what are the processes, operations and documents involved).

(3) Why is the work done in the manner prescribed?

(4) Who does the work and to what extent?

(5) Where is the work done and what limitations does this impose?

(6) When is the work done and what limitations does this impose?

(7) Which related activities elsewhere need consideration with the form or work being studied?

Quantitative information can be collected simultaneously with the above procedural information. This means that whenever practicable, figures should be obtained indicative of the following:

• The number of operations undertaken and forms completed.

• Incidence of work over a selected period.

• Volume of arrears of work at selected points in time.

• Time taken to do work or complete forms.

• Costs of the various stages of work.

• Number and nature of errors, queries or other indications of ineffectiveness or inadequacy.

A record of the procedures involved in the use of the form, setting out in sequence all the operations concerned, will establish the facts to aid analysis. Usually a simple flow chart is adequate, but sometimes other types of charts are valuable. Where a series of forms has to be studied it may be of advantage, as an alternative, to mount specimens on a large spread sheet and record the associated action alongside.

Whether a narrative record or a pictorial means of setting out the procedures is used, each operation should be defined in such a way as to bring out the characteristics of the action, for example, whether it represents the copying of existing entries or the recording of new entries. Terms such as "write" or "enter" may obscure the fact that action is "copying," which, if known, would have entailed consideration of the appropriate aids to copying.

Clearly, so much review work will not be done for every form. Rather it will be limited to

PRINTING AND STOCKING SPECIFICATIONS

TO	FORM NUMBER OR OTHER DESIGNATION	FEDERAL STOCK NUMBER (If any)
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION REGION 3 FEDERAL SUPPLY SERVICE—3FRC WASHINGTON, D.C. 20407	SF-152	7540-634-3990
	EDITION DATE June XX	MANDATORY USE DATE —	OPTIONAL USE DATE —

TITLE OR DESCRIPTION
General Provisions (Supply Contract)

A—ANNUAL USAGE (Approximate)

QUANTITY	UNIT
50,000	each

B—SIZE (Less detachable stubs)

FLAT	FOLDED	TRIMMED
8" x 10 1/2"	x	8" x 10 1/2"

C—CONSTRUCTION

- [X] SINGLE SHEET
- [ ] CARBON INTERLEAVED PADS
- [ ] MARGINALLY-PUNCHED CONTINUOUS
- [ ] PADS: NUMBER OF SHEETS___ NUMBER OF SETS___
- [ ] MULTIPART FORM: NUMBER OF PARTS PER SET___
- [ ] COMBINES WITH___ TO FORM SET
- [ ] OTHER (Specify)
- [ ] SNAPOUT SETS
- [ ] PAPER PLATE
- [ ] DIE IMPRESSED STENCIL

D—FILE PUNCHING

- [X] TOP
- [ ] BOTTOM
- [ ] FRONT
- [ ] LEFT

E—MISCELLANEOUS

- [X] VERTICAL TYPEWRITER SPACING IS REQUIRED (6 per inch)
- [ ] SERIALLY NUMBERED

F—HOLES

NUMBER	DIAMETER	CENTER TO CENTER
2	1/4"	2 3/4"

G—PAPER STOCK AND INK

PART NUMBER	GRADE OR QUALITY OF PAPER	SUBSTANCE (GPO STANDARD)	COLOR OF PAPER	COLOR OF INK	FACE ONLY	HEAD TO HEAD	HEAD TO FOOT	HEAD TO SIDE
-	Sulfite, writing	32 lb	white	black				x

H—CARBONS (Check and complete as appropriate)

- [X] NO CARBONS
- [ ] CARBONS BETWEEN ALL PARTS

SIZE OF CARBONS
- [ ] ALL FULL LENGTH
- [ ] OTHER

TYPE OF CARBONS
- [ ] PENCIL
- [ ] TYPEWRITER
- [ ] BLACK
- [ ] BLUE

I—PROOFS

NUMBER REQUESTED	SEND TO (Name, address and ZIP Code)	AGENCY WILL RETURN PROOFS TO GSA REGION 3 WITHIN	AGENCY WILL READ PROOFS AT GPO	AGENCY WAIVES PROOFS
6 ea	Leon King Room 607, NARS Bldg., 20408	3 DAYS	[ ] YES [X] NO	[ ] YES [X] NO

J—STOCKING INSTRUCTIONS

- [X] STOCK IN GSA SUPPLY DEPOTS
- [ ] ACCOUNTABLE ITEM, RECORD ALL ISSUES OR SALES
- [ ] NO COST DISTRIBUTION, REQUEST SUPPLIES FROM,
- [ ] OVERPRINTED OR SPECIALTY ORDERS MAY BE EXPECTED
- [ ] MAY BE SOLD TO PUBLIC BY SUPERIN TENDENT OF DOCUMENTS, GPO
- [ ] OTHER (Specify)

K—DISPOSITION OF EXISTING STOCK

AFTER A FULL REVIEW OF THE EFFECT, AND IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE GOVERNMENT, GSA IS REQUESTED TO TAKE THE ACTION(S) INDICATED BELOW WITH RESPECT TO SUPERSEDED AND RELATED ITEMS.
(Obtain data regarding stocks on hand and due-in from GSA Region 3, Federal Supply Service.)

FORM OR SERIES NO.	FEDERAL STOCK NO.	EDITION DATE	% USAGE WILL INCREASE	% USAGE WILL DECREASE	ON HAND AND DUE-IN	UNIT OF ISSUE	TOTAL CATALOG VALUE	CODE*	EFFECTIVE DATE
SF-152	7540-634-3990	June XX	X					4	

*ACTION CODE
1 DISCONTINUE ITEM IMMEDIATELY; DISPOSE OF EXISTING STOCKS.
2. DISCONTINUE ITEM ON DATE INDICATED; DISPOSE OF STOCK AT THAT TIME.
3. CONTINUE TO ISSUE EXISTING STOCKS; DO NOT REPRINT.
4. DEPLETE EXISTING STOCKS BEFORE ISSUING REVISED OR MODIFIED ITEM.
5. OTHER (Specify at right)

L—ATTACHMENTS

- [X] PRINTER'S COPY
- [ ] PROMULGATING DOCUMENT
- [ ] SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
- [ ] OTHER (Specify)

STANDARD FORM 152
JUNE 1967
PRESCRIBED BY GSA
FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.8, 101-26.3

SPECIFICATIONS FOR COMPLETED JOB FOR PROCUREMENT AND PRINTING

Figure 9

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those with a large usage, those which are basic to significant procedures, those involving the public, and those which are costly in terms of printing.

Initiating Analysis Projects

The review of new and revised forms, as well as stock replenishment review, is usually referred to as "over the counter" business. A forms management office should not be confined to this kind of business, which largely comes from forms originators. There are always some forms which must originate within the forms management office itself.

A great many forms management offices put the internal origination of forms on a project basis. See figure 10 for the elements involved in project planning. This can formalize the work, highlight its nature, keep tab on the progress made, and when completed aid in reporting what has been done. Projects furnish a basis from which an analyst can initiate broad studies of functions or systems.

Clues to areas for possible analysis projects are obtained from sources such as:

- Suggestions made by the operating personnel (for example, through the beneficial suggestions program, collection of samples of forms, day-to-day contacts, followups to explain the function and help insure cooperation). These may concern both the forms and procedures

the operator has initiated or those with which he is involved; for example, through preparing or using the completed forms, or through other phases of the procedure.

- Areas suggested by top management for potential savings and improvement.

- Operational areas in which problems are known to exist such as backlogs, bottlenecks, unusual time lags, excessive volume, repetition, or numerous errors. These indications can come from personal knowledge or activity operations, information in procedural or organizational surveys, inspection reports, contacts with key or other activity personnel or other sources.

- Review of forms and information collected for the forms management files. In doing forms research, the forms management office has two tools the originator does not have—the numeric and functional files. A forms management office that is unable to keep its numeric and functional files up to date will gradually weaken its position until it finally loses control over the forms of the organization.

A well balanced project schedule should include short-term projects that can be quickly completed and that will yield results to show immediately the benefits of forms management. It should likewise include long-term projects on more complicated or well entrenched operations, which will involve considerable expenditure of time but pay substantial dividends in manhours and improved operations.

If the managing of forms is to be one means of ensuring continuous attention to procedural problems, then forms management offices should not be kept so busy by over-the-counter business that no analyst can be spared to follow through on the procedural improvement clues mentioned above.

A variation of project work is to set up special task forces to study specific segments of an agency's forms. Under this plan, members of the forms management staff join with members of a particular activity to review all of the forms used by that activity. For example, the data processing division and the

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CONSTRUCTING THE PROJECT

1. Title, purpose and scope of project

2. Organizational component concerned

3. Plan for arriving at a possible solution

4. Estimated man-hour savings or other benefits to be derived

5. Estimated man-hours budgeted to the project

6. Estimated beginning date

Figure 10.

forms management staff will jointly study all forms that are later keypunched into cards for input to the computer. When the two groups are studying payroll forms, for instance, the accounting division will assign personnel to work with the task force. When they get to the purchasing forms, the supply department will do likewise. The task force method has the benefit of assuring that a whole group of related forms will be considered at one time rather than piecemeal, one form at a time, which is the normal pattern. A disadvantage is that the task force is not a continuing entity. Its members have full-time jobs in their own divisions and are usually anxious to get back to their own work.

Preparing Specifications

Very few originators have much technical knowledge in "constructing" a form. This refers to the knowledge needed to arrange for pre-numbering, punching, perforating, folding, carbon-interleaving, collating, padding, and scoring. The desirability or undesirability of these features could be developed during the analysis of the form. They must be written into the specifications for the completed job prepared by the forms management office for procurement and printing. Figure 9 is a commonly used "space sheet." When specifications

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are not carefully prepared, extra make-ready, press time, and bindery work can add materially to forms costs. In order to keep these extra, but often desirable, expenses at a minimum, the forms management office in cooperation with printing and reproduction must develop construction standards on such items as:

Pre-numbering.—Desirable only if sequence control or strict accounting for each copy is required.

Punching.—Specified to fit standard binders, clip fasteners, or filing equipment used by the agency.

Perforating.—Limited to instances when a portion of a form must be detached, or a form or set detached from a stub or a book.

Padding.—Used only if it facilitates handling.

Establishing Standards

Mentioning construction standards, above, is a reminder that certain yardsticks are essential to guarantee that all forms have graphic and physical features required for:

- Simplicity and efficiency of fill in.
- Visibility in reading, including filing and finding.
- Acceptability of appearance.
- Economy in reproduction.

Such yardsticks or guides are called standards, because they represent the best practice based on current knowledge. Thus, standards play a very large role in any forms management program. There is a tendency, however, to think of them as useful only to the forms professional staff. For small agencies this often means the standards are not published. For large agencies they are often published, but in a directive of interest only to the professionals and the forms contact representatives. The concept of standards underlying these practices is fallacious.

Actually, standards are needed at two levels—(1) those standards which can be generally applied by originators, frequently published in agency-wide regulations, and (2) those standards which will be generally applied only by the professional staff, sometimes published in handbook format. Standards to be used primarily by the professionals need be published only by those agencies with large field operations.

Appendix B is an example of standards for originators. In establishing standards for originators the emphasis should be on demonstrating how the standard achieves benefits. For example, standard sizes save paper, and the use of standard-size filing equipment prevents the purchase of more costly nonstandard-size equipment. Paper weight and grade standards save money. In most instances the box design standard simplifies fill in, and in the process saves the time of the typist.

Right spacing reduces the tendency to error in entering or using the data. The standards that contribute to this important end are:

- Clear segregation of related vertical columns.
- Ease in following a reading and writing line across and down the page.
- Clear association of filled in data with the printed captions.

Standard rulings, type sizes, and type faces create a favorable attitude on the part of the forms user toward the job in hand. This actually reduces fill in time.

The standards for originators should not only be published but also be explained at training sessions so that any questions about their value will be answered. The explanation should demonstrate by example how the standards:

- Make easy the task of inserting information on the form.
- Make easy the use of the information after entry on the form.
- Reduce the tendency to error in both entering and using the data.
- Make for paperwork and printing economy.

Standards are not inviolable rules. When deviation from the adopted standards for originators appears necessary, however, there should be justification by the originator. This justification should demonstrate that more is to be gained by deviation than by compliance.

Replenishing the Supply

On page 11 of Chapter III the "Stock Replenishment Notice" was mentioned. The routing of this replenishment notice varies widely in the Federal establishment, with four differing methods being most often used.

METHOD 1.—Replenishment notice sent direct to the originating office by supply operations. Originating office returns notice direct to supply operations, unless a revision of the form is desired.

Difficulties sometimes arise under this method unless the notice from supply operations is *always* handled by the same liaison point in each of the several responsible offices with which the forms management program deals.

METHOD 2.—Replenishment notice sent direct to originating office by supply operations. Originating office returns notice through forms management office.

This method reduces the coordination time of the three parties concerned and assures full coordination because it keeps them all advised of what is happening or about to happen.

METHOD 3.—Replenishment notice sent to forms management office which accepts full responsibility for clearing with the

appropriate offices. Forms management office returns notice to supply operations.

Some supply operations prefer this plan, for it gives them a single responsible point—a forms management office—with which to coordinate such matters. It relieves them from dealing with different individuals scattered through bureaus, divisions, branches, or even sections.

In installing any of the three methods above, the person who handles the review and clearance of the stock replenishment notices determines whether any particular form can be released for automatic replenishment.

METHOD 4.—Supply accepts full responsibility for replenishment of any given form without further reference either to the originator or the forms staff until a notice of discontinuance or revision is received.

As a part of any automatic replenishment plan, offices responsible for the continuing use of current forms should be required to advise the forms management office promptly—

(1) when a current form is being considered for revision; or

(2) when any new form or procedure is being developed which might make a current form obsolete or materially change its usage.

Upon receipt of such advice, the forms management office promptly "flags" the form on its records and notifies supply operations to stop replenishment for that form.

FORMS ACTION LOG

FORMS MANAGEMENT DAILY ACTIVITY

ANALYST: *John Martin*

MONTH AND YEAR: *July 19XX*

PAGE ___ OF ___ PAGES

DATE IN	SUS-PENSE DATE	FORM NO. OR TITLE	NEW DEPT	NEW LOCAL	REV DEPT	REV LOCAL	CORRE-SPONDENCE ADMIN DEFICIENCY	SUGGESTIONS	OTHER	SPEC REVIEW	DIRECTIVES	PROJECTS	OBSO-LETE LOCAL	OBSO-LETE DEPT	INTERIM DATE OUT	DATE OUT	REMARKS
3 Jul	5 Sept	AF 96			✓											9 Aug	
8 "	6 Aug	AF 139			✓						✓						
8 "	16 Jul	AFP 88-15									✓					Expedite	
9 "	10 "	DD 861									✓						
11 "	18 "	AFR 40-292	✓						✓							17 Jul	May replace SF-536
12 "		AF 1080															
15 "	26 Jul	Sug WP66-897															
15 "	15 Aug	AFHQ O-23			✓												

V. REPORTING ON THE PROGRAM

Any good forms management program will justify itself by producing benefits. Plans for identifying and describing these should be part of the program to help top management evaluate the program's contribution to the agency management effort.

Facts for reporting progress should be drawn easily from existing office records, where it exists in (1) statistical and (2) narrative format. When there are forms offices at various levels within an agency, such as bureaus, services, commands, and major activities, it is wise to have each one report to the departmental program office. From these reports the departmental office can glean the information needed for top management. It is also wise to have the resulting consolidated report circulate among the component offices, for exchanging and extending improvement ideas.

Statistical Reporting

Any forms program manager should know how many forms are under registration control, how many new forms were introduced into the system during any given month, how many forms were analyzed, how many forms were revised, and how many were discontinued. He can gather most of this information from the forms action log, or equivalent. This log is a chronological record of action taken as the work is done on new, revised, and reprinted forms. It shows the status of any form under consideration. Figure 11, showing such a daily activity record, is derived from the Air Force.

Narrative Reporting

Helpful as statistics are to show that a staff is working hard, they are not enough. Narrative accounts are also needed to portray the quality aspects of the program. Such accounts do not limit accomplishments to elimination and creation, but paint a truer picture of how the forms produced improve operations throughout the agency, reduce man-hours required, lower the cost of forms, and secure public goodwill. Information needed to write an effective narrative report can usually be found in the numeric file folders which were depicted in figure 6.

Most narrative accounts start out as case histories. Later there may be summaries, and summaries of summaries, but case histories are the bedrock. Figure 12 provides a typical narrative, in this case an illustrated one from the Bureau of Customs. Narrative accounts need be long. Management can call for details on any accomplishment of particular interest.

Sometimes procedures are reworked because poor forms showed the need for procedural revision. Only a case history can do justice to a description of what was done, how and why, and what the results were. Such case histories can also provide a valuable on-the-job training source for new analysts.

In reporting significant case histories, analysts should avoid involved cost computations. Also, they should at times defer writing the report until the forms and procedures have been fully tested by operations.

Narrative reports are useful to point up problems and emphasize areas where additional management support is needed. They are especially handy to report on workshops, training sessions, and the issuance of promotional material.

Promotional Reporting

Progress reports can be used to promote the program and publicize its usefulness to a larger audience than top management. The reason for "drum beating" is not to magnify the self-importance of the forms program and its staff. Rather, it is because opportunities to improve agency efficiency through forms depend to a considerable extent on agencywide attitude and follow through.

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TYPICAL NARRATIVE REPORT STATEMENTS
(based on briefed case histories)

CUSTOMS PAPERWORK REDUCED

In response to a request by the President, a special work group in the Bureau of Customs completed a year-long review to eliminate needless paperwork pertaining to imports and exports. As a result of its efforts, some 256 forms have been, or will be, abolished; 85 of these were forms used directly by the public. In terms of processing, this will mean a reduction of 1,324,000 pieces of paper each yearwithin Customs and 566,000 pieces of paper the public will no longer have to prepare. Customs will save an estimated $341,000 in rpocessing time and costs. Additionally, an estimated 1 million pieces of paper other than official Customs forms have been eliminated; this will save an additional $100,000 yearly.

Private business played an active partnership role with the Treasury Department in this special campaign to eliminate unnecessary red tape. For example, the Air Transport Association conducted a Customs paperwork elimination contest of its own with good results. Further assistance came from the National Council of American Importers who presented a certificate of national recognition to one of the winners of the Bureau of Customs paperwork elimination contest.

Figure 12

EXAMPLE OF PROGRAM PROMOTION

57 REPORTING SYSTEMS eliminated !

Single form replaces production reports and 57 different test result formats from commercial producers of veterinary biologics.

Annual savings . . . **$37,500**

Dr. Bernard LaSalle

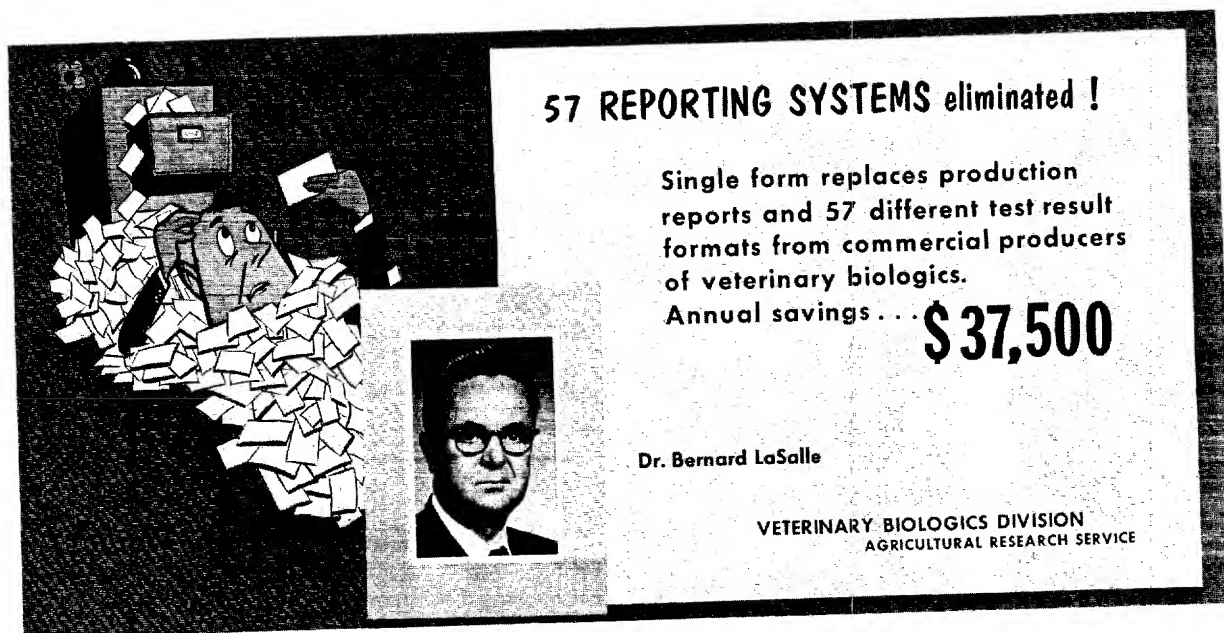VETERINARY BIOLOGICS DIVISION
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Figure 13

Program promotion has for its aim a better understanding of basic goals. Figure 13 is a graphic by the Department of Agriculture which typifies a kind of popularization of cost reduction. It is written with the kind of pungent crispness that attracts the attention of thoughtful supervisors.

Figure 14 is an example of progress publicity. A press release by the U.S. Civil Service Commission, it shows how the new Standard Form 170 (which can be completed in 10 to 20 minutes) will replace much of the use given the former Standard Form 57 (which took one-half to three hours to complete).

Credit should be given to persons and units responsible for contributions. Generous acknowledgment of the aid of others helps encourage agency participation in forms improvement.

Where to Look

There are five main areas in which a forms management program most commonly produces benefits. These are discussed below. Some of the benefits come primarily from changes made to meet design standards. Others come from an analysis of a procedure and the role the form plays in it.

Processing

Processing, of course, involves all the steps, motions, and sequences in a paperwork system or procedure. Improvements, therefore, come from actions which affect initial fill in, additional fill in at other points, utilizing and translating the data, routing and mailing, and housing of the form in binder or file. Processing costs, on the average, are 20 times greater than printing.

Typical of the ways form improvements affect processing are the following. They can:

- Reduce total time cycle by reducing paperwork steps involved. This can eliminate backlogs.

- Reduce time devoted to typing and writing. By using Typewriter Motion Analysis the saving can be measured precisely.

- Reduce form fill in time by facilitating eye or hand movement.

- Make possible use of new, more economical office machines.

- Reduce errors and thereby the time spent in correcting errors.

- Reduce spoilage of forms.

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EXAMPLE OF PUBLICIZING PROGRAM
PROGRESS BY PRESS RELEASE

CIVIL SERVICE

news

U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C
20415

news unit

telephone: 343 7391
room 5354 / 1900 E st N W

FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12, 1963

Government's venerable Form 57, "Application for Federal Employment," is giving way to progress. A short, simplified form that will suffice for applicants seeking Federal jobs in the future will take its place.

Chairman John W. Macy, Jr., of the Civil Service Commission today announced that the formidable 4-page Form 57 will be replaced by Form 170, a 4-by-8-inch card that will provide all the basic information needed initially to consider an applicant for a given job.

"The person who hates to fill out long, involved forms will find the Standard Form 170 a refreshing change," he said. He added that the abbreviated application "responds to President Johnson's continuing call for improved service to the public."

Designed primarily for the use of persons who have passed civil service tests and by Federal employees who are job-hunting, the simplified form permits an applicant to describe briefly the type of job he is seeking, his availability, and his education and work experience.

Form 170 is also expected to be a fast and handy form of inquiry for use by people without eligibility, who are seeking general Federal employment information.

The form provides enough information for a Federal employer to decide whether he is interested in learning more about an individual. If he is not interested because the applicant is not qualified, or if no job is vacant in the occupation or salary range identified by the applicant, more information would waste the time of the applicant and the employer.

If a vacancy exists at a suitable grade level and the applicant seems qualified, the employer must obtain more information before selecting the applicant. To obtain this information, a second new form, Standard Form 171, has been designed. It is called "Personal Qualifications Statement," and is similar in many ways to the current Standard Form 57.

(more)

The Commission expects that the new forms will reduce significantly the number of times that applicants will complete full statements of their qualifications. In addition, the process will reduce the time required to screen applicants.

Figure 14

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- Reduce number of sequences in any single paperwork step.

- Reduce time devoted to extracting or tabulating.

- Increase use of time-saving window envelopes. Each window envelope saves at least a penny in clerical processing.

- Clarify procedural instructions, decreasing reading time.

- Speed and simplify authentication of data, thereby cutting time.

- Save time by substituting continuous carbon-interleaved forms for loose cut-sheet forms and loose carbons.

- Speed up and assure more accurate routing.

Printing

Savings in printing, including paper costs, are more easily measured than others and provide tangible dollar savings. These savings are based on the elimination of forms without replacement, or with reduced replacement; combination of two or more forms into one; printing on one side of the paper instead of both sides; and reduction in the number of copies of cut sheets or in unit sets of forms. For printing done outside the agency, printing-cost reductions are usually dependent upon good specifications having been prepared by forms analysts.

A distinct advantage in computing the dollar value of printing-cost savings is that cumulative dollar figures can be compared with salaries of the forms staff. It is common practice to report this comparison to management, saying that: *"on June 30, 19—, the dollar amount of printing-cost savings for the fiscal year just ended was ?————. This compares to ?———— for the total annual salaries of the forms staff."*

Stocking

Benefits come from planning procurement time so as to coordinate delivery to stocking points simultaneously with the issuance of related procedures; from systematic determination of quantity usage on new forms; from controls for prompt advice on discontinued forms; and from controlled disposition of obsolete items.

Distribution

Improvements result from cooperation with supply and distribution units. Shipping costs are lowered when forms are made a standard size; so are packaging costs. Packaging costs are further lessened when forms are combined.

Filing

Lower costs result from the best placement of data for ease of filing and finding; from eliminating unnecessary copies; and from holding to a minimum the filled-in copies, which in turn holds down duplicate files. Opportunities for improvements in this area are overlooked more often than in the others. Filing costs are about 2½ times the printing and paper costs.

Computing Benefits

Forms management benefits can be reported in terms of personnel, space, or material, or any combination of the three. These benefits can all be converted to dollar savings using the kind of formulas shown in figure 15.

Under "personnel" the problem is to compute the number of manhours of effort that have been eliminated through improvements. Under "space" the problem is to compute the space (for equipment and people) which can be released or utilized for other purposes. Under "material" the problem is to compute the supplies, equipment, and printings which are not required as a result of improvements.

One of the basic ways of computing benefits is the before-and-after method; another is through the use of formulas. To get the "before" part of the picture, answers to questions like these must be found: What did it cost? How long did it take? How many were produced? How many people did it take? These measurements must be cast against the answers to the same questions after the form or the form-producing procedure was changed.

Measurable vs. Nonmeasurable

Many benefits can be measured in terms of fewer manhours, fewer pieces of paper, less printing costs, less equipment, and less space.

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FORMULA FOR SHOWING BENEFITS CONVERTED TO DOLLAR SAVINGS

COST FORMULAS

1 persons space=80 sq. ft. of floor space (typing and clerical)

1 cubic ft. of records=1 sq. ft. of floor space

1 filing cabinet=6 sq. ft. of floor space

1 horizontal card cabinet=5 sq. ft. of floor space

1 sq. ft. of floor space (office)=$3.76 (including maintenance)

1 ream of 8″ x 10½″ bond paper= $0.90 a ream

1 manual typewriter=$225

1 electric typewriter=$450

1 paper stock cabinet=$59

1 filing cabinet (letter size)=$57

1 tab card filing cabinet=$163

1 typed envelope replaced by window envelope=$0.02

1 safe file (standard 4 drawer)=$530

1 linear ft. of shelving=$3.00 (standard shelf files)

1 man-hour=$2.25 (changes with salary rates)

1 man-year=1760 man hours

24 dictated letters replaced by form letters=one man-day

120 envelopes addressed=one man-hour

180 lines of straight copy=one man-hour

120 lines of form fill-in=one man-hour

30 copies posted=one man-hour

60 copies filed=one man-hour

90 copies mailed (folded and inserted) =one man-hour

15 copies verified for accuracy of fill-in=one man-hour

Processing 10 forms per man-day= $1,600 per thousand forms

Processing 40 forms per man-day= $400 per thousand forms

Figure 15

Examples of nonmeasurable benefits are those that come from improved public relations because a form is easier to fill in and easier to understand is usually too intangible to be reported; or the better morale that develops through better appearing forms.

Recurring vs. Nonrecurring

Some benefits go on year after year. Others are one-time savings. The best practice here is to count only the benefits for the first full year.

Actual vs. Estimated

When a copy of a form is eliminated, at least the actual price of the paper is saved. Filing time is also saved, but it will usually have to be estimated because clerks differ so much in their work pace. In reporting benefits, whether they are actual or estimated should be indicated.

Recoverable vs. Nonrecoverable

Suppose a new form reduces printing costs, and also suppose 10 minutes of an official's time is saved through an improvement in the procedure involved. The first benefit is recoverable, but the second probably is not recoverable unless the official handles many such forms. The great challenge to officials is to recover as much of a forms saving as they can. In any event, the two kinds of benefits should be differentiated in reporting.

Nonmonetary vs. Monetary

A form may save 1,000 manhours. This can be reported, or efforts can be made to translate the manhours into dollars. Most measurable results can be changed to dollars. In the translation of actual commodities to dollars, however, the dollar benefits frequently must be estimated because it will be so much easier to produce the figure by formula.

APPENDIX A
GSA REGULATIONS ON FORMS MANAGEMENT

The material cited below are printed in the "Federal Property Management Regulations",
Subchapter B—Archives and Records, published by General Services Administration,
Washington, D.C., 20408

101–11.208 Forms—agency program responsibilities.

§ 101–11.208–1 The forms management function.

The objectives of forms management are to increase the usefulness of forms through proper design and accurate using procedures, to reduce costs incident to filling in, using, and filing forms; and to achieve savings in designing, printing, storing, and distributing forms.

§ 101–11.208–2 Forms defined.

A form is any document, including letters, post cards, and memorandums, printed or otherwise reproduced with space for filling in information, descriptive material, or addresses. Certain printed items without fill-in space, such as contract provisions, instruction sheets, notices, tags, labels, and posters, may be considered as forms when it is advantageous to identify and control them as forms for purposes of reference, printing, stocking, distribution, and use with other forms.

§ 101–11.208–3 Program requirements.

(a) Each Federal agency, in providing for effective controls over the creation of records, is expected to establish an appropriate program for the management of agency forms (§ 101–11.201–1). The program will:

(1) Establish and implement standards and procedures for the submission, review, approval, and identification of agency forms.

(2) Implement the forms analysis and design standards set forth in pertinent GSA Records Management Handbooks.

(3) Establish and implement standards for the reproduction, stocking, and distribution of approved blank forms.

(4) Provide essential management information concerning the number, types, and the reproduction and stocking costs of forms in use.

(5) Provide for the periodic review of all approved forms for need and design, and for possible economies in reproduction, stocking, and distribution.

(b) Standards, guides, procedures, and instructions developed for the forms management program are to be in published form, designed for easy reference and review. They should be readily available to those who initiate, design, and approve forms.

§ 101–11.208–4 Program implementation.

The following actions are generally basic to a forms management program:

(a) Establish and maintain an inventory of all agency forms.

(b) Analyze all forms inventoried and all forms submitted for approval in the future in accordance with standards, guides, and principles set forth in the GSA Records Management Handbook, Forms Analysis.

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(c) Review all forms inventoried and all forms prepared in the future for adequacy of design, maintaining the standards, guides, and principles set forth in the GSA Records Management Handbook, Forms Design.

(d) Assign a form number and edition date to each approved form.

(e) Review all requests for new forms and reprints of approved forms to determine that the forms are produced and made available quickly and cheaply. Specifically determine that:

(1) The most effective and economical methods of printing and distributing the form are employed, commensurate with required quality and intended use of the form.

(2) Proper and adequate inventory level standards have been established.

(3) The quantity of the form requested is compatible with procedural and inventory requirements.

(4) An acceptable distribution plan exists for making the form available when and where needed.

(f) Require that each form be supported by a directive setting forth instructions for preparing, submitting, and using. (Not applicable to self-explanatory forms used by a single organizational element such as an office, division, or region.)

(g) Require that each request for a new form justify the form's essentiality.

APPENDIX B

FORMS DESIGN STANDARDS

The following standards should be applied by the initiating unit when drawing a rough sketch of the form to be submitted with the forms requisition. The forms management staff in reviewing the request will make any necessary adjustment of specifications before forwarding the requisition for duplicating or printing.

1. Cut Form Sizes

Any size that can be cut from 32 x 42 inches without waste, particularly sizes 3½ x 8, 4 x 5¼, 8 x 10½ and 16 x 10½.

Normal file card sizes: 3 x 5, 4 x 6, 5 x 8.

Post card sizes: 3¼ x 5½.

Considerations:
    (a) Avoid crowding content;
    (b) Conform to dimensions of storage and filing facilities (i.e., legal size, letter size, etc.);
    (c) Fit to standard office machines for fill-in (i.e., typewriter, bookkeeping machine, etc.);
    (d) Fit to standard-size envelopes.

2. Paper Weight and Grade

Operating unit ordinarily should specify one of the following four:

Mimeograph	36 lb. (basis 17 x 22)
Card	180 lb. (basis 25½ x 30½)
Sulphite	32 lb. (basis 17 x 22)
Bond (25% rag)	32 lb. (basis 17 x 22)

Selection should be based upon:
a. Handling requirements;
b. Writing method;
c. Number of copies to be made at one writing;
d. Length of time the form will be retained;
e. Printing requirements (i.e., printing on two sides, by a given process, etc.);
f. Filing and storage space requirements (affected by thickness of paper).

3. Color of Paper

Specify color only when needed for emphasis or for more efficient filing, routing or sorting. Reduce the need for colored paper by use of sorting symbols, bold headings, heavy ruled lines or other devices when possible. Exceptions permissible for specific organization or operating requirements.

4. Color of Ink

Specify other than black ink only when fully justified by volume and increased efficiency in use of the form and when the more economical possibilities of colored paper are inadequate. Two colors should be avoided except under extreme justification.

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5. Identification and Heading

Heading may be centered across entire top of form or centered in space to the left of any entry boxes placed in upper right. (Upper right should be designed for file or other ready-reference entries if needed.) Within space decided upon, arrange generally as follows:

Form number and issuance or revision date—upper left corner.

Agency name and location (if needed)—upper left (under form number) or top center (depending on its importance in use of form).

Form title—center of top (under agency name and location, if that item is centered). Use conspicuous type.

Bureau of the Budget number and expiration date, for Federal report forms—upper right corner.

Exception: Run identification across bottom of vertical-file-card forms unless needed for file-reference purposes.

6. Instructions

Well designed forms require few instructions other than captions and item headings. When required, instructions usually should—

a. Be set in two or more narrow columns rather than full-width lines.

b. Be listed as numbered items rather than in paragraph style.

c. Be placed as near items to which they apply as possible (unless length would detract from effective layout).

When instructions are segregated on form, they should be placed—

a. At top right or top center, if concise and applicable to the whole form.

b. At bottom, if that will make possible more economical use of space.

c. On reverse, if no space available on face.

7. Address

If name and address are inserted on form by agency prior to mailing, position of name and address should be suitable for window-envelope use. Forms requiring return to an agency should be properly identified as provided under Standard No. 5.

Forms intended for use in window envelopes must conform to postal regulations, which in general provide that nothing other than name and address, and possibly mailing symbol, shall appear in the window. The form must fit the envelope to avoid shifting of the address. Standard-size envelopes only should be used. *Post Office Department Schedule of Award of Contracts for Envelopes* is the guide to standard envelope sizes.

8. Pre-printed Names or Facsimile Signatures

If form is to be stocked for continuing use, personal name or signature of official may be preprinted only on special justification or by legal requirement (to avoid having large numbers of forms made obsolete by change of officials). Preprinting of titles only or the use of rubber stamps or automatic signature inscribers are alternatives to be considered.

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9. Form Arrangement

   a. Align beginning of each writing space on form vertically for minimum number of tabular stops.

   b. If box design is used:

     (1) Serially number each box in its upper left-hand corner;

     (2) Start caption in upper left-hand corner, to right of number, leaving fill-in space below caption;

     (3) Draw box size to provide sufficient space for fill-in.

   c. Place essential information where it will not be obscured by stamps, punches, or staples, or be torn off with detachable stubs.

   d. Group related items.

   e. Include "to" and "from" spaces for any necessary routing.

   f. Provide for use of window envelopes, when appropriate, to save additional addressing.

   g. To the extent practicable, provide same sequence of items as on other forms from which or to which information is to be transferred.

   h. Arrange information for ease in tabulating or transferring to machine punch cards, if those are involved.

10. Check Boxes

Use check boxes when practicable.

   a. Place check boxes either before or after items, but all in the corresponding positions within any line series.

   b. Avoid columnar grouping of check boxes if possible, because of poor registration when carbon copies are required. Place check boxes before first column and after the second column when there are two adjacent columns of questions.

11. Margins

Printing Margin. Printed all-around borders usually should not be used since they tend to increase production problems and costs. In any event an extra margin of ⅜ inch or not less than ³⁄₁₀ inch from edge of paper should be allowed on all 4 sides for gripping requirements in printing and as a safety margin for cutting. No printing—neither border nor text—should be permitted in that space.

Binding Margin. For press-type fastener, side or top, 1 inch; for ring binder, 1 inch (printing permitted but no fill-in within these margins).

Fill-in Margin. Top typewriting line, at least 1⅓ inch from top of paper if possible. Bottom typewriting line, not less than ¾ inch from bottom. Hand fill-in permissible above or below these lines.

12. Space Requirements for Fill-in

Typewritten—10 characters to the horizontal inch to accommodate both elite and pica typewriters;

       3 fill-in spaces to the vertical inch, each space being double typewriter space.

Handwritten—⅓ more space horizontally than for typewritten fill-in;

       3 spaces to the vertical inch, each space double that of typewriter space.

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13. Rulings

a. Use heavy 1½-point or parallel ½-point rulings as first and last horizontal lines, between major divisions, and across column headings.

b. Use ¾-point rulings across bottom of column headings, and above a total or balance at the foot of a column.

c. Use hairline rulings for regular lines and box lines when no emphasis required.

d. Use ¾-point rulings for vertical subdivision of major sections or columns.

e. Use leaders as needed to guide eye in tabular or semi-tabular items.

14. Signature and Approval Date

Single handwritten signatures usually go at bottom right of last page. Allow ½ inch (three single typewriter spaces) vertically and three inches horizontally.

Two handwritten signatures, normally left and right at bottom of last page.

Space below the ¾-inch bottom typewriter margin generally reserved for handwritten signatures and dates.

15. Two-Sided Forms

a. Two-sided forms ordinarily should be printed head to foot (top of front to bottom of back), especially if top-punched for binder use.

b. If punched in left margin for binder use, 2-sided forms should be head to head.

c. Three- or 4-page forms (one sheet folded once) should be head to head throughout if open-side style, and head to foot if open-end (so that, when opened for use, head of third page follows foot of second page).

d. Head-to-foot open-end forms are preferable for machine fill-in.

e. For multi-page forms, separate sheets of proper page size should be used instead of larger sheets folded to page size, unless the larger sheets can be cut economically from standard paper sizes and run on standard printing or duplicating equipment.

16. Prenumbering

Use prenumbered forms only if accounting or control is required for each form or document. Place number in extreme upper right corner.

17. Punching

For standard press-type and 3-hole ring binders:

Distance from edge of paper to center of hole should measure ⅜ inch;

If 2 holes are punched, for press-type fastener, the distance between centers should be 2¾ inches;

If 3 holes are punched, distance from center to center of adjacent holes should be 4¼ inches.

CHECK LIST

The questions are so worded that check marks in the "NO" column indicate the need for corrective action.

	YES	NO
1. Has a policy directive establishing a forms management program in the agency been issued by top management?	☐	☐
2. Are there any training courses on forms improvements being given in the agency?	☐	☐
3. Have forms liaison representatives been appointed throughout the agency?	☐	☐
4. Is every new, revised, or reprinted form analyzed for its necessity, extent of duplication with other forms, the wording on the forms, the sequence of the fill-in, and all requirements for copies?	☐	☐
5. Are local forms included in this analysis?	☐	☐
6. Is full use made of standard forms?	☐	☐
7. Is there periodic analysis of office procedures in which forms are used?	☐	☐
8. Is there a set of standards for the application of modern forms design techniques?	☐	☐
9. Are form numbers and edition dates assigned from central points under an established numbering system?	☐	☐
10. Are numeric history and functional files of all approved forms maintained?	☐	☐
11. Are procurement specifications for specialty forms prepared and reviewed by trained forms analysts?	☐	☐
12. Are quantities and methods for stocking and distribution developed as part of the analysis and design of new or revised forms?	☐	☐
13. Do supply facilities provide dependable service on quantities of forms on hand, usage figures, and lead-time requirements at a low obsolescence rate?	☐	☐
14. Do the forms management staffs regularly make spot checks with using points, originators, and procedure writers on the more complex forms?	☐	☐
15. Is there an established method for periodic reporting to top management on the progress of the forms programs?	☐	☐
16. Does this report include computations of measurable benefits and savings?	☐	☐

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